RYUUJI... YOU LIKE ME, DON'T YOU?
YOUR LIFE COULD SAVE MINE.
SO COULD YOU PLEASE DO YOUR BELOVED A FAVOR...
...AND DIE FOR ME?
THE STORY
THE YEAR IS 1977, AND THE REMOTE MOUNTAIN VILLAGE OF YONAKI HAS BEEN QUARANTINED. THE KING'S 8TH ORDER HAS SPLIT THE VILLAGERS INTO "HUNTERS" AND "HUNTED" AND YUUJI HAS ALREADY DIED BY SHUUHEI'S HAND. KAZUNARI, STUNNED BY THE LOSS OF HIS BEST FRIEND, DOESN'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO MOURN WHEN HE SEES KYUUJI ABOUT TO BE MURDERED BY MICHIKO!
KING'S GAME
ORIGIN

PLEASE?
KING'S GAME
ORIGIN
STORY BY NOBUAKI KANAZAWA
ART BY JUN YAMADA
CHAPTER 26
SMIRK

GLAZGW
UH-AAH.
KSHHAAAAAA

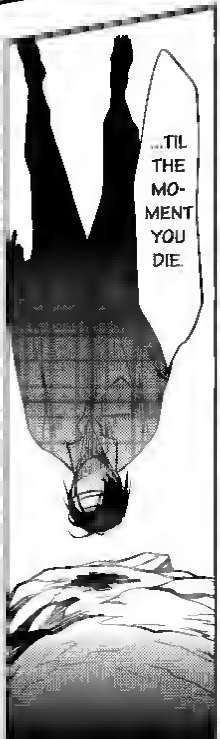
MI-CHIKO, STOP!
AND RYUUJI, RUN BEFORE THEY KILL YOU!
KAZU-NARI
GLARE!
YOU'RE ON...
...THE KILLERS' TEAM TOO.
MICHIKO... WHY DON'T YOU GO AFTER KAZUNARI?
HE'D BE THE EASIEST PERSON TO KILL, RIGHT?
OH YEAH, NOW I REMEMBER.
BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT A CRUSH ON HIM...
I'VE BEEN IN LOVE WITH YOU FOREVER.
RIGHT?!

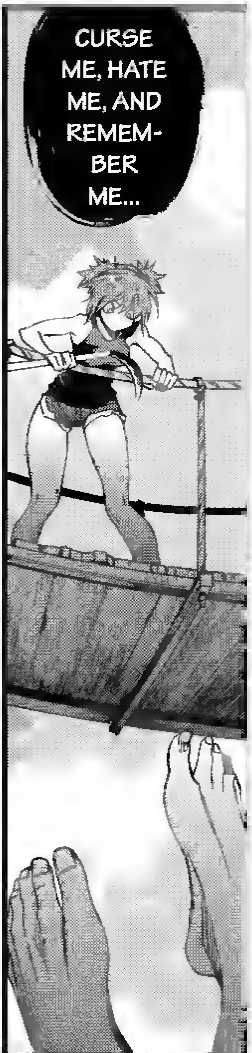
...ONE SECOND LATER YOU'D SMIRK AND SAY, "AH, WELL."
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SAVE ME, RYUUJI
TING
TING
...
IF I WERE TO DIE FOR YOU..
WHICH MEANS I'M EX-PEND-ABLE TO YOU.

CRUUUU
TO MAKE SURVIVING THIS ORDER MUCH HARDER.
BUT I JUST THOUGHT OF A WAY TO MAKE SURE YOU NEVER FORGET ME.
RYUUJI?
I'M GONNA PUT UP A LITTLE HURDLE FOR YOU...

GO COWER IN FEAR NOW THAT YOU'VE GOT NO WAY TO SURVIVE.

SP


...TIL THE MO-MENT YOU DIE.


CURSE ME, HATE ME, AND REMEM-BER ME...

STUMBLE
TWITCH
TWITCH
WRIGGLE
WRIGGLE
ARGH.
NOW YOU'VE DONE IT, RYUUJI.

IF YOU WERE GONNA TO COMMIT SUICIDE AFTER YOUR RANT
. YOU MIGHT AS WELL HAVE LET ME GET THE KILL.
YES.
RYUUJI WASTED HIS LIFE
THIS WON'T HELP ANYONE.
YOU WERE A DUMBASS .
..UP TO THE VERY END.
ナ
TSHHHAAAAAA
AND NOW WE HAVE ANOTHER PROBLEM.
YEAH, ONLY FUMIKO-SAN AND YUUJI ARE LEFT
I'VE ALREADY KILLED YUUJI
AND YOU TOOK CARE OF ATSUSHI-SAN, CORRECT?

ME TOO I GUESS THERE MUST BE ANOTHER.
THE MYSTERY PERSON.. I REALLY THOUGHT WE'D ALREADY HANDLED THAT..
IT'D BE IDEAL IF WE EACH KILLED ONE OF THEM, HUH?
SO IT'S DOWN TO FUMIKO-SAN AND THE VIRUS'S MYSTERY PROXY.
LIKE I SAID, THAT'D BE IDEAL, BUT .
RIGHT, RIGHT
YOU KNOW, SINCE THE KING'S GAME IS FORCING US TO KILL THEM.
IF THERE IS, WE'LL BOTH SURVIVE
HEY, KAZUNARI.
CAN YOU GO BACK TO THE VILLAGE? JUST IN CASE?

JUST... IN CASE?
YEAH, SOMEWHERE YOU'LL BE EASY TO FIND
THE MEETING HALL OR YOUR HOUSE
WHY...?
WELL, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KILL ANYONE, RIGHT?
THEN LET US DO THE HONORS
EITHER WE GET YOU OR THE KING FLAYS YOU...
...BUT YOU'RE DEAD NO MATTER WHAT.

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO SAVE EVEN ONE VILLAGER...
IF WE CAN'T FIND SOMEONE ELSE, WE'LL COME BY AT THE LAST SECOND
...LETTING ONE OF US KILL YOU IS THE BEST WAY.
SEE YA LATER!

SHOULD I...
ACTUALLY LET MICHIKO OR SHUUHEI-SAN MURDER ME?
WELL YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KILL ANYONE, RIGHT?
ANOTHER DEATH...
MY DEATH COULD SAVE ONE OF THEM.
I WANTED TO SAVE EVERYONE...
...BUT IN THE END, I COULDN'T DO A THING.

BUT WILL THAT PUT AN END TO THE KING'S GAME?
WON'T ANOTHER ORDER JUST COME TOMORROW?
NATSUKO...
GRIP

SATURDAY
AUGUST 20,
10:53 P.M.

WHAT FOLLOWS IS MY RECORD OF THE BIZARRE EVENTS THAT LED TO THIS, SO THAT THE WORLD MIGHT KNOW.
I WONDER IF ANY OF IT WILL EVEN MATTER IN THE END?
I REFUSED TO OBEY UNDER ANY CIRCUM-STANCES.
THUS, I CHOOSE TO END MY OWN LIFE.
SUICIDE NOTE
I CHOSE TO IGNORE THE ORDER.

I GUESS I'D RATHER DIE IN MY OWN HOME.

I DON'T KNOW IF SUICIDE IS THE RIGHT ANSWER.

I'M... SO TIRED...
BUT I DO KNOW THAT I DON'T WANT TO BE MURDERED BY A FELLOW VILLAGER.
EVEN IF IT RESULTS IN THEIR DEATH, TOO.

I CAN "FINALLY" END IT ALL.
HOLD IT JUST LIKE THIS.. DON'T THINK..
ONE QUICK THRUST, AND IT'S OVER.
POKE...
HA.. HA HA HA..
EVEN AT THIS STAGE, MY BODY'S AFRAID TO DIE..
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
C'MON. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?
I'M A DEAD MAN NO MATTER WHAT.
THE ONLY QUESTION NOW IS HOW IT GOES DOWN.

FLINCH
THUMP
SIDE
DRAGGG
WHO'S THERE?!

KAZU...
NARI...
NA...

NATSUKO...
NATSU-KO... NATSU-KO!
YOU'RE ALIVE... I KNEW—
KA—
KA-ZU-NARI...

EVER SINCE... THEY PUSHED ME OFF THE CLIFF...
NOD
YOU CAN'T HEAR ME?
MY VOICE?
CAN'T .... HEAR YOU...

PUSHED YOU OFF A CLIFF?!
WHO?!
WHO PUSHED YOU OFF A CLIFF?!

THEY THOUGHT I WAS THE KING...
SHUUHEI-SAN...
MICHIKO...
ATSUSHI-SAN...
KOUJI-SAN...
THAT'S RIGHT, THAT NIGHT...

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, EVER SINCE SHE VANISHED...
...TOO MUCH OF WHAT SHUUHEI-SAN AND MICHIKO HASN'T ADDED UP...
I SAW THE FOUR OF THEM COMING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN.
SO THEY WERE COMING BACK FROM TRYING TO GET RID OF NATSUKO!
HAVE YOU SEEN NATSU-KO?
THAT'S WHY THEY WERE SO ADAMANT SHE WAS DEAD!
BECAUSE THEY WERE SURE THEY'D KILLED HER!
GRIT

THE MYSTERY PERSON. . I REALLY THOUGHT WE'D ALREADY HANDLED THAT.
ME TOO. I GUESS THERE MUST BE ANOTHER.
THOSE BASTARDS! THEY SAW ME EXHAUSTING MYSELF LOOKING FOR HER, AND THEY...
NATSUKO!
SLUMP

SIGH...
SQUEEZE

BUT. IF THEY REALIZE NATSUKO'S STILL ALIVE...
THANK GOD...
HER BREATHING'S MUCH STEADIER NOW...
...MICHIKO AND SHUUHEI-SAN ARE SURE TO TRY AND KILL HER.
NOW I CAN'T DIE.
...NOT ON MY WATCH.
ニヤニヤ

I HAVE TO PROTECT NATSKO!

SHFF